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MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence  
FROM: Director of Central Intelligence  
SUBJECT: Agency Fitness Report System

Under my policy of direct communication with the Director, I recently received a memorandum with the following comments on the Agency fitness report system:

a. "Agency fitness reports are short and not fully comprehensive. They appear not to be the most important thing in terms of ascending to better jobs, obtaining choice assignments, etc."

My comment: It seems to me as we emphasize the panel system and its inviolability, we should give publicity to the fact that this makes the fitness report an increasingly important item for our personnel. We should both emphasize the importance of its being filled out properly and when we review the form itself we should perhaps make it more comprehensive so that it can form the basis for judgments on promotion and assignments.

b. "Guidance on doing Agency fitness reports seems generalized and vague. Guidance seems to be Directorate-wide rather than Agency-wide."

My comment: My inclination is that the Office of Personnel should manage the fitness report system, including the publication of the instructions on how to fill them out and the retention of fitness reports in a centralized location. The Office of Personnel should be responsible for ensuring each employee's fitness report file is complete, and for resolving

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any controversies that may evolve over it. In short, if an employee takes any exception to his fitness report or if a rating officer makes comment on topics which are not proper or relevant (and I have seen some of that), there should be an impartial Agency office that reviews these and keeps tabs on them. We should be able to turn to the Office of Personnel at any time and expect to obtain an up-to-date, complete fitness report file on any employee.

c. "At least in cases of clerical fitness reports, I have discovered gaps in at least two cases. When I noted this, no one seemed overly concerned and I had to infer from this that this sort of thing was being tolerated and was not necessarily career-damaging."

My comment: Same as above.

d. "The folklore among numerous NFAC personnel is that fitness reports written in the DDO are consistently marked higher than in NFAC. Many NFAC personnel seem to resent this since it is felt that it gives the DDOers an advantage in obtaining the better jobs and in gaining promotions."

My comment: We'll have to work to bring this down. It is my understanding there is a considerable difference in the number of Outstandings between our four Directorates. (I can't remember which, but it seems to me two were high and two were low.) At the same time, it seems to me that we should emphasize that promotions are determined on a Directorate basis, at least up to supergrade; therefore, this kind of inflation does not have a major impact on the individual. In turn, I wonder if we shouldn't make the supergrade promotions an annual affair on an Agency-wide basis. Clearly, we would have to assign quotas so that we didn't end up with GS-16s we could not assign, for instance, but it might be healthy if one panel looked across the Agency to see what kind of talent we were bringing up in what areas and where there could be useful cross-fertilization. Further, it would emphasize the "general" nature of the duties of supergrades.

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3

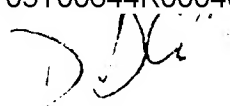
e. "Should there be a requirement to note such specific skills as language and level of proficiency in fitness reports?"

My comment: Seems highly desirable.

STANSFIELD TURNER

cc: DDA  
D/Personnel

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Language Emphasis.

I have on the one hand been impressed with the quality of Agency language training, instructors, and facilities and with the ease with which one may partake of these benefits in house, at no cost to the student. On the other, I have been impressed that such training is not emphasized more, particularly for analysts and particularly for those to whom it would provide significant means for substantial improvement in the quality of their analysis. (How for example can one do really good political, doctrinal, or policy analysis without the capability to read the relevant language?) I have been most surprised that, in this national-level intelligence agency,  language skills in greater depth and breadth do not abound. Some thoughts:

a. Should language skills and levels be a specific Agency fitness report item?

b. Should there be monetary incentives for language skills? (I understand that these existed  in times past, but were discontinued, with unhealthy effects on  language skills of numerous analysts.

c. Should a different means for testing language skills be instituted? The  reading test is, in my opinion, inadequate for the purpose intended. It may be taken over and over and is the same test. This means that over time one could eventually "max" it. It is, I believe, a test devised in house. Why not use, for such testing, standardized, independently devised, and changing tests--such as those administered by the State Department, educational institutions, etc.--particularly if monetary rewards and/or fitness report items are involved?

d. Should the DCI, in some appropriate document or forum, stress to Agency employees the importance of language skills, especially for analysts?

**Page Denied**

Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied

Agency FITREPs.

When I worked as the XO in the Center for Policy Support, I drafted several FITREPs on both professionals and clericals for the signature of my boss,

Following are some comments, impressions, and folklore:

a. Agency FITREPs differ markedly from military ones in appearance, length, comprehensiveness, impacts on careers, and the availability of explicit guidance on filling them out. They are shorter and less comprehensive. They are not always, I believe, the most important thing in terms of ascending to better jobs, obtaining choice assignments, etc. Guidance on doing Agency FITREPs seems generalized and vague, in contrast to the detailed, explicit guidance we have on filling out military FITREPs. Guidance seems to be directorate-wide rather than Agency-wide.

b. At least for the clerical FITREPs I did, I discovered gaps in at least two cases. When I noted this, no one seemed overly concerned, and I had to infer from this that this sort of thing was tolerated and that it was not necessarily career damaging.

c. On the theme again of directorate-wide vice Agency-wide policies, the folklore among numerous NFAC personnel is that the FITREPs written in DDO are consistently marked higher than in NFAC. Many NFAC personnel seem to resent this since it is felt that it gives DDO'ers an advantage in obtaining the better jobs and in gaining promotions. Marking inflation in NFAC does seem to be resisted and "outstanding" (and even "strong") marks seem much the exception rather than the rule.

d. Should, therefore, the Agency FITREP system be looked at in terms of comprehensiveness, consistency of markings among the various directorates, clarity of guidance on filling them out, completeness of the string of FITREPs throughout a person's Agency career, etc.? (And should there be a requirement to note such specific skills as language (and level of proficiency) in FITREPs?